



# AL KAMANDJATI

Al Kamandjati Association ([www.alkamandjati.com](http://www.alkamandjati.com)) is a non-profit organization established in 2002 in France and 2004 in Palestine. It was founded by Ramzi Abu Redwan from Al Amari refugee camp, near Ramallah. Its vision is to introduce and promote broad-based musical education and appreciation as an integral part of Palestinian life.

**Mission:** Al Kamandjati exists to make music accessible to the entire Palestinian community and to teach music to Palestinian children and strengthen their appreciation of Palestinian culture and identity.

**Objectives:** Al Kamandjati aims to set up music schools and musical interactions for Palestinian children, in particular the most vulnerable – those living in refugee camps and marginalized or remote locations. We aim to offer children the chance to discover their cultural heritage and to give them access to global opportunities to grow their creative potential.

## Our Programs and Activities

### Music Education

In order to reach its objectives, Al Kamandjati Association (AK) implements **an original and tailored music education program in 6 different locations in Palestine** (old city of Ramallah, old city of Jenin, the refugee camps of Al Amari, Qalandiah and Jalazon, and the village of Deir Ghassana), **as well as in 2 locations in Lebanon** (the refugee camps of Bourj el Barajneh and Chatila).

Around **500 children**, between the ages of 5 and 18, benefit from this program by learning how to play musical instruments, studying music theory and taking pride and enjoyment in expressing themselves through music. **And, we are currently able to cover 80% of our students through scholarships!**

AK's vision is a **long term** one, in which the students are enrolled with us for up to 10 years. During this time, not only do they perfect their skills in their instruments of choice, but AK also offers a much needed space for them to **learn how to express themselves through art**. [Some links here.](#)

Further, students who show a great deal of promise – our strongest students – fly abroad, with a strong connection to France (conservatories of Toulouse, Angers, Bordeaux, and the ITEM School in Le Mans). The aim is that the students complete their studies under the tutorship of experienced and esteemed professors and that, in turn, the students return **as teachers themselves to pass along their knowledge** to new generations of aspiring Palestinian children and to **revive the Palestinian cultural and musicals scene**. [Some links here.](#)

AK works on **introducing music education to UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency) schools, located and serving the children of the refugee camps**. AK specifically targets these schools because, until today, they are the **only schools in Palestine that do not provide music education for children**. AK believes that it is these young people – those at UNRWA schools -- who would benefit the most from music in their lives. Indeed, they usually come from deprived socio-economic backgrounds and would not have access to it otherwise.

AK believes whole-heartedly in the **benefits gained in using music as part of the early curriculum** and its school projects **reach around 2000 children between the ages of 5 and 8** every year. [Some links here and here.](#)

After the success of our education program, AK implemented a music education program in **6 kindergartens** in the Jenin area (North Palestine), serving around **500 children between the ages of 3 and 5** each year.

### Concerts & Festivals

In order to increase access to music and culture to the Palestinian community, Al Kamandjati organizes several activities that also allow for our students to showcase their talents:

**Student Concerts:** AK students from all locations perform several times a year for their peers and the local community. It is an opportunity for them to show their achievements, as well as learn to perform in front of an audience and gain self-confidence and self-esteem. [Some links here.](#)



**Teacher Concerts:** AK teachers perform regularly in concerts through partnerships with various cultural institutions in Palestine. They can offer a wide range of styles to suit each partnership including western classical, oriental, jazz and more. These experienced performers provide high caliber performances to the Palestinian cultural calendar. [Some links here.](#)

**The Music Days Festival:** AK has organized a summer festival annually since 2006. The festival offers a window to Palestine and renews and extends the invitation to visit this beautiful country and its people in a musical celebration. Around 50 performances are staged in all corners of Palestine bringing music to every section of the Palestinian community.

In addition to concert halls, theatres and cultural centers, performances are held in community centers, Red Crescent centers, orphanages and open public spaces. The festival hosts over 100 musicians and singers from Palestine and abroad representing a myriad of musical genres. The performers include amateurs and those who have made music their life profession, local talent and foreign ensembles. Jazz, Classical, Hip Hop, Rock, Eastern beats and traditional Palestinian and Arabic music call all be heard. [Some links here.](#)

**The Palestine Sacred Music Festival:** AK has organized this annual event since 2005. The festival, previously named the Baroque Music Festival, has expanded to allow for a larger representation of music from different cultures. The festival gathers international and Palestinian musicians and together they present a series of concerts celebrating the sacred and historical music of all the cultures (classical, Sufi etc.), which are interwoven into the tapestry of Palestinian life.

The concerts take place in several Palestinian locations with the aim of letting people discover and enjoy new styles of music by professional musicians. [Some links here.](#)

### **Making & Restoring Musical Instruments**

In spite of the increasing interest in music among the Palestinian community, as well as the increasing number of institutions providing music education, what is still missing is **the expertise making, restoring and tuning instruments**. For this reason, Al Kamandjati succeeded in facilitating the studies of three young Palestinians in this field, and opening **three workshop spaces** in the old city of Ramallah dedicated to building their expertise. **Each student studying one of the following: string instruments, pianos, and wind instruments.**



AK believes it is imperative to boast this skill in Palestine. It is important to have those who can craft and repair instruments at a professional level and provide skilled artisan knowledge at the heart of the community.

Today, our **AK string instrument maker knows how to create professional high quality string instruments**. AK has started to receive requests to export instruments to international workshops abroad (including NY).

